IN THE CLAIMS:

Kindly rewrite Claims 1-14 as follows, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121:

1. (previously presented) A method for producing an L-amino acid comprising culturing an *Escherichia coli* bacterium in a medium; allowing said L-amino acid to accumulate in the medium and/or in the cells of the bacterium; and collecting said L-amino acid, wherein the endogenous *Escherichia coli* gene encoding the RMF protein is mutated so that the RMF protein is inactive, and wherein said L-amino acid is produced in larger quantities than if the RMF protein were active.

2-5 (cancelled)

6. (previously presented)The method according to claim 1, wherein said L-amino acid is L-lysine.

7. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said bacterium is WC196Δrmf.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said bacterium is WC196Δrm/pMPI700.

9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said mutated RMF gene is obtained by PCR amplification of *E. coli* genomic DNA using PCR primers consisting of SEQ ID NO. 1 and SEQ ID NO. 4.

10. (previously presented) A method for producing an L-amino acid comprising culturing an *Escherichia coli* bacterium in a medium; allowing said L-amino acid to accumulate in the medium and/or in the cells of the bacterium; and collecting said L-amino acid, and wherein an expression control sequence of the endogenous *Escherichia coli* gene encoding the RMF protein is mutated so that said RMF protein is inactive, and wherein said L-amino acid is produced in larger quantities than if said RMF protein were active.

11. (previously presented) The method according to claim 10, wherein said L-amino acid is L-lysine.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein said bacterium is WC196Δrmf.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein said bacterium is WC196Δrm/pMPI700.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 10, wherein said mutated RMF gene or said mutated expression control sequence of said gene is obtained by PCR amplification of *E. coli* genomic DNA using PCR primers comprising SEQ ID NO. 1 and SEQ ID NO. 4.